

# 2005 BWC Race to Excellence

## BWC Network Conference Call

On April 21, 2005, Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> (BWC) held a conference call to introduce the first annual BWC Race to Excellence. Patrice Thornton from EPA's Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> team welcomed the participants to the call and also introduced Susan Bullard, another EPA Race to Excellence team member. During the strategy session, Ms. Thornton and Ms. Bullard explained the concept of the Race to Excellence and answered participant questions.

The BWC Race to Excellence is a fun and exciting way for organizations involved in Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> to receive recognition for their organization. This first-of-its-kind national competition is a way for EPA to recognize its partners who are actively championing Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> and/or promoting their designation as one of the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>. Ms. Thornton stressed that participants are not competing against each other—this is completely based on their own efforts.

Ms. Thornton explained that the Race to Excellence is geared to two different audiences—BWC Network Members and the employee transportation coordinators (ETCs) of employers that have been designated as Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>. To participate in the Race to Excellence, each organization must fill out an application by August 1, 2005. Two different versions are available at <[www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov)>—one for BWC Network Members and the other for ETCs.

### Why participate in the BWC Race to Excellence?

This is a great opportunity for BWC Network Members and employers to be recognized by peers, the community, and their management.

### How do I apply?

Network Members and ETCs of existing Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> may apply by filling out the appropriate application

available at <[www.bwc.gov/networkawards/index.htm](http://www.bwc.gov/networkawards/index.htm)>. The application asks for information on the activities performed between March 1 and August 1, 2005. However, this is a flexible awards program. EPA encourages BWC Network Members and employers to submit information on any activities completed even if they are not specifically listed on the application. In addition, EPA will make exceptions for activities that have occurred outside of the designated time range, if they are regularly occurring events.

To help Network Members and ETCs plan and complete these types of activities, EPA encourages them to take advantage of the Employer Toolkit and the Promotional Toolkit for Network Members. Both are available at <[www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov)>. EPA is constantly adding helpful materials to these toolkits that will be valuable to Network Members and employers during their participation in the Race to Excellence.

### What are the incentives?

Ms. Thornton indicated that EPA will recognize those organizations participating in the Race to Excellence at the ACT Conference this fall. Ms. Thornton also explained that the incentives are based on the recognition level that each organization achieves.

#### Bronze Level

- ▶ Certificate of recognition.
- ▶ Letter to company management signed by EPA recognizing achievements.
- ▶ Recognition on the BWC Web site and in newsletters.

#### Silver Level

- ▶ Certificate of recognition.
- ▶ Letter to company management signed by EPA recognizing achievements.
- ▶ Recognition on the BWC Web site and in newsletters.

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- ▶ Letter to the business/environmental section of local newspaper.
- ▶ Letter to local elected officials or decisionmakers.

## Gold Level

- ▶ Certificate of recognition.
- ▶ Letter to company management signed by EPA recognizing achievements.
- ▶ Letter to the business/environmental section of local newspaper.
- ▶ Letter to local elected officials or decisionmakers.
- ▶ Inclusion of organization on a poster that will list all Gold Level participants and will be showcased at conferences and other events throughout the year.

All recognition incentives will be generated in close collaboration with the winners to ensure that recognition is value-added.

## Open Discussion

- ▶ Ellie Ferrer from Meadowlink Commuter Services in New Jersey asked several questions about different activities mentioned on the application. First, she asked what it meant to promote the use of the logo. Ms. Thornton clarified that promoting use of the logo means that the Network Member would encourage local employers that have received the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> designation to use the logo on their Web sites and on other materials. Ms. Ferrer also asked for additional details about BWC Districts. Jeffra Rockwell from EPA indicated that a BWC District is a well-defined geographic area where a TMA or other organization provides commuter benefits that meet EPA's *National Standard of Excellence* to all of the employees who work for employers within that geographic area. Kevin Tingley, also from EPA, indicated that he is the main point of contact for BWC Districts and can be reached at (202) 343-9338 with any district-related questions. Finally, Ms. Ferrer asked how Network Members could go about setting up a challenge for employers. Mr. Thornton indicated that EPA will e-mail the

call participants a document that lists the steps for putting together an employer challenge.

- ▶ Betty Battles from the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (The T) in North Texas mentioned that she works on a Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> campaign with the North Texas Clean Air Coalition. Taking that into consideration, she asked how EPA would suggest the groups apply for the Race to Excellence. Susan Bullard reminded the participants that the Race to Excellence is a flexible program and, in this case, the participants can decide how it makes the most sense for them to apply, either separately or as a group of organizations.
- ▶ Ms. Thornton reminded the group that applying for the Race to Excellence is separate from an employer applying to be designated as one of the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>. Ms. Bullard added that the Race to Excellence is intended to recognize organizations that are helping further the mission of Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> and is also a great opportunity for EPA to learn more about what activities these organizations are undertaking.
- ▶ Sharon Lewinson from Nortel Networks asked if the individual ETC or Network Member would be recognized or an organization as a whole. She indicated that she is not as interested in individual recognition as in recognition for the organization as a whole. Ms. Thornton indicated that EPA is flexible to accommodate any requests similar to this in order to ensure that organizations are recognized based on their preferences.

## Closing

Ms. Thornton ended the call by encouraging everyone to visit <[www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov)> and review the application forms. If anyone has any questions about the Race to Excellence, they may contact Patrice Thornton at (734) 214-4329 or <[thornton.patrice@epa.gov](mailto:thornton.patrice@epa.gov)>. Participants may also contact the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> information request line at (888) 856-3131 or <[bwc@epa.gov](mailto:bwc@epa.gov)>.